

Comments during the Meeting of Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project in the Legislative Council on 16 May 2011:

Honorable Chair and Members,

1. Of the three designs, Norman Foster's winning design has a monotonous waterfront and efforts should be made to incorporate elements from the diverse waterfront designs prepared by Rocco and Koolhaas to ensure a far more interesting and vibrant waterfront experience for visitors of the West Kowloon Cultural District.
2. Piers – even the construction requires reclamation - should be included along the shore of the West Kowloon Cultural District to ensure people can use the harbour for transport, leisure and tourism. Protecting the harbour not only requires maintaining the amount of harbour, but also the enhancement the value of the harbour as a harbour. Any loss of value of the harbour through reclamation must be balanced with the gain in value of the harbour by enhancing the use as a harbour.
3. In structuring the ownership and management of venues, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority must ensure that it can allow for owners and managers to fail. The success of cultural districts in cities such as London and New York is built on bankruptcies and failures, on competition and success. The process of trial and error ensures learning and adaptation to market circumstances. If the Authority attempts to get all venues right itself and not allow failure, it will fail. If it can create an environment within which owners and managers can compete, fail and succeed, the district as a whole will grow to succeed.

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